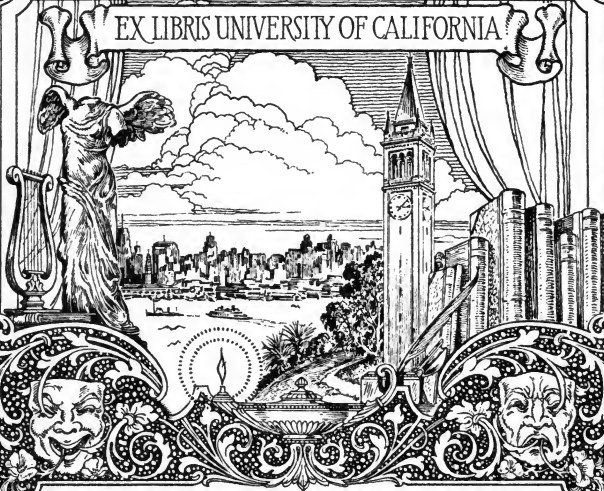


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FAIRY DAYS

TO THE MEMORY OF
ELIZABETH TINGLE FAIRBANKS



*Her form, a frail and lovely April flower,
The gift of April when her smiles prevailed;
For Betty's radiant sunshine never failed
To banish tears,—to cheer the saddest hour.*

*Tho' flower-like her sunlit hair and face,
Her spirit was a flame of rarest power;
And now we know it was no earthly flower
That April lent us for a little space!*

*Her mind, like flashes from the April skies
Was clear and keen, and filled us with amaze!
A little April flower with numbered days,
But oh, the wisdom in those serious eyes!*

*And her sweet spirit smiles on us today,
And fain would wipe our tears of grief away.*

FAIRY DAYS

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE

THACKERAY



NEW YORK
PRIVATELY PRINTED
CHRISTMAS, 1919

Beside the old hall-fire—
 upon my nurse's knee,
Of happy fairy days—
 what tales were told to me!
I thought the world was once—
 all peopled with princesses,
And my heart would beat to hear—
 their loves and their distresses;
And many a quiet night,—
 in slumber sweet and deep,
The pretty fairy people—
 would visit me in sleep.

I saw them in my dreams—
 come flying east and west,
With wondrous fairy gifts—
 the new-born babe they bless'd;
One has brought a jewel—
 and one a crown of gold,
And one has brought a curse—
 but she is wrinkled and old.
The gentle queen turns pale—
 to hear those words of sin,
But the king he only laughs—
 and bids the dance begin.

The babe has grown to be—
the fairest in the land,
And rides the forest green—
a hawk upon her hand,
An ambling palfrey white—
a golden robe and crown:
I've seen her in my dreams—
riding up and down:
And heard the ogre laugh—
as she fell into his snare,
At the little tender creature—
who wept and tore her hair!

But ever when it seemed—
her need was at the sorest,
A prince in shining mail—
comes prancing through the forest,
A waving ostrich-plume—
a buckler burnished bright;
I've seen him in my dreams—
good sooth! a gallant knight.
His lips are coral red—
beneath a dark moustache;
See how he waves his hand—
and how his blue eyes flash!

“Come forth, thou Paynim knight!”—
 he shouts in accents clear.
The giant and the maid—
 both tremble his voice to hear.
Saint Mary guard him well!—
 he draws his falchion keen,
The giant and the knight—
 are fighting on the green.
I see them in my dreams—
 his blade gives stroke on stroke,
The giant pants and reels—
 and tumbles like an oak!

With what a blushing grace—
 he falls upon his knee
And takes the lady's hand—
 and whispers, "You are free!"
Ah! happy childish tales—
 of knight and faërie!
*I waken from my dreams—
 but there's ne'er a knight for me!*
*I waken from my dreams—
 and wish that I could be
A child by the old hall-fire—
 upon my nurse's knee!*

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OF THIS BOOK TWO HUNDRED COPIES WERE PRINTED FOR
THOMAS NAST FAIRBANKS, BY WILLIAM EDWIN RUDGE,
IN DECEMBER, 1919.

